



Crews work on hospital

MEN PUT UP BRICKS Monday at the Decatur County Hospital's specialty clinic addition. Jeff Edwards (above) cut the bricks with a machine while Martin Pfister (right) put the bricks on the exterior wall. While some men worked outside, others worked on the inside, which will soon house an 11-room expansion to the hospital.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis



County supports airport plan

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Decatur County commissioners talked with economic development officials about raising money to help build a longer runway at the Oberlin airport last Tuesday, expressing support but making no promises.

Greg Lohofener, chairman of the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp. board, and Connie Grafel, marketing director for the city and the development agency, came to talk with the commissioners about ways the county could help raise money for the multi-million dollar project.

A longer runway, said Mr. Lohofener, would increase economic activity for the whole county.

The two had met with commissioners Tuesday, Aug. 14, but Commissioner Ralph Unger was absent, so they wanted to come back. The idea was to get some kind of letter of support to take to an upcoming meeting with representatives from the governor's office on Friday, Sept. 7.

Commissioner Stan McEvoy asked if the city is in charge of fuel sales and landing fees at the airport. The city could use the revenue from fuel sales for operation on the airport, said Mr. Lohofener.

County Attorney Steve Hirsch said airports set their own landing fees, and the city can set fees for its airport.

How much would the local match be for the project? asked Commissioner Ralph Unger. Mr. Lohofener said he has just scratched out an estimate, which is around \$400,000 go \$600,000.

Mr. Hirsch, at the request of the

County roundup

At their meeting last Tuesday, the Decatur County commissioners:

- Talked with economic development officials about raising money to help build a longer runway at the airport, but didn't make any decisions. Story at left.
- Heard that the state court system will soon have open records online so people can pay to see them from their computer. Story to come.
- Talked with the emergency management director about coverage during the fire northwest of town on Monday, Aug. 27. Story to come.

commissioners, did some research on the kind and amount of bonds the county could issue to borrow money for the airport. He said the city could do a revenue bond up to \$300,000 without an election and then use airport revenue to pay it back. General obligation bonds, usually repaid by raising taxes, can be issued up to \$50,000 without an election.

Can both the revenue and general obligation bonds be done for the project? asked Mr. McEvoy. Yes, said Mr. Hirsch.

So the city could maybe do revenue bonds and the county the general obligation? asked Mr. McEvoy.

Mr. Unger asked if the county has authority to raise money for a city- (See COUNTY on Page 10A)

Runway plan will be pitched to state officials

Members of the Oberlin City Council will go to Hays on Friday to talk with officials from the state Department of Transportation and the governor's office about the project to build a longer runway at the Oberlin airport.

City Administrator Gary Shike said he thought the council might talk about the Friday session at their regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. Thursday at The Gateway.

At the Hays meeting, he said, the city will make a pitch to the Transportation Department to get money for the 7,000-foot runway. Mr. Shike said Brad Wesinberger from the project engineers, Bucher, Willis and Ratliff of Kansas City, will make the presentation with others adding their testimony.

On the list to attend the meeting are Randy Ostmeier, a member of the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp. board; Gene Gallentine, a member of the city's airport committee; Connie Grafel, marketing director for the development agency and the city;

Greg Lohofener, development corporation chair; Patti Skubal, county emergency preparedness director; Mayor Joe Stanley and Mr. Shike from the city; Councilman Jay Anderson and his wife Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener and her husband; Mitch Hall from Congressman Jerry Moran's office; Debbie Pugh from Sen. Pat Roberts office; and possibly state Rep. John Faber.

Mr. Shike said he thought the council would talk at length about the airport meeting on Thursday.

Also on the agenda, he said, is selecting voting delegates to the Kansas League of Municipalities annual conference.

Usually a delegate and an alternate are selected.

Mr. Shike said the council probably will probably talk about changing prices and rates for new electric and water meter services.

The meeting, upstairs at The Gateway, is open to the public. It will be televised on Oberlin cable access channel 7.

Amusement Authority members resign

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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Seven members of the Decatur County Amusement Authority — the group which runs the home-owned carnival at the Decatur County Fair — resigned last week, turning in their keys and responsibilities to the Chamber of Commerce.

The members — Ward Votapka, president; Kristi Gallentine, secretary/treasurer; and Lynn Groneweg, Jason Fortin, Ray Ward, Peggy Ream and Kelsey Gallentine — all signed a letter of resignation and handed it over to the Chamber after

the carnival ended this year.

That leaves three members on the authority, including John Sauvage, Dana Marintzer and Vicky Ray.

The letter and keys went to the Chamber because the authority was formed under the business group when the carnival started years ago. Chamber President Marilyn Horn said the bylaws from 1973 actually state that the 12 members on the authority are to be chosen through an election at the chamber's annual meeting in January. On Friday, she said, the chamber board met with Oberlin lawyer Chuck Frickey to start updating the bylaws.

Although the Chamber hasn't received the amusement authority's books or financial reports for this year, said Mrs. Horn, the last four years' documents are on file at Warren Bainter's accounting office. Before that, she said, she isn't sure where the information was kept.

The letter said the members were resigning "due to safety issues taken out of the Amusement Authority's control. Safety is a very important issue to our group, something we feel is owed to the patrons of the fair."

It goes on to say that the resignations went to the Chamber since the

authority grew out of the Chamber. The letter said that after the bills are paid for this year, the members will turn over the checkbook and other financial information.

"We wish the next group great success and want to see the fair continue to be the best around," the letter said.

The Herald called all the members who signed the letter asking for comment. Messages were left on answering machines, although not all of the members had machines. Kristi Gallentine, who was reached at work, said she had no comment on the issue.

Labor Day race pulled for 'low turn out'

By **JIM MERRIOTT**
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Oberlin racing promoter Rick Salem said last week he had decided to cancel the United Rebel 305 Sprint Series race scheduled for Sunday of Labor Day weekend at the Oberlin Speedway due to low fan turnout.

The race was pigtailed with a Labor-Day-weekend Sprint series set

for Elmwood Park Speedway in Norton, Salem said.

The cars ran a two-day race in Norton instead of coming to Oberlin, he said, with 29 cars racing each day.

"For some reason, Oberlin just doesn't draw the crowds that other speedways draw," said Salem. "Part of the problem is that other raceways have beer gardens."

"I have a reputation around the

country of putting on a good show. Other towns allow me to shoot off a four-burst one-shot fireworks display before the main event for the fans. Oberlin will not allow fireworks or beer sales."

Decatur County attorney Steve Hirsch said the county commissioners would have to approve any beer sales at the county-owned fair-ground. Commissioners once considered allowing beer at the races,

but decided it might cause problems.

City Administrator Gary Shike stated that a city ordinance bans fireworks other than during the Fourth of July period. It would have to be changed by the City Council to allow fireworks before the races, he said.

Around the area, Elmwood Speedway in Norton allows beer sales. Speedways at the Colby and (See PROMOTER on Page 10A)

Wind work session postponed for later

A City Council work session to discuss wind power scheduled for tonight has been canceled because representatives of all the groups involved couldn't make it to the meeting.

The council planned the work session tonight to discuss an agreement proposed by Sunflower Wind LLC out of Goodland and get some questions answered.

City Administrator Gary Shike said the council wanted representatives from Sunflower Wind and Sunflower Electric Power Co., the city's current provider, at the meeting, but the representatives from Sunflower Electric weren't able to make it.

Mr. Shike said the city has lots of questions, including some about transmission lines. (See CITY on Page 10A)